

each from a common source, New Guinea. Thirdly, that New Zealand and New Caledonia were early separated from the northern archipelagoes, and ceased to receive overland immigrants therefrom. Fourthly, that the Fijis remained to a later date in communication with the Solomons, but were severed from that group before the latter had acquired from Papua much of its present fauna.

LXXI.—*Note on Mesoplodon bidens.*

To the Editors of the 'Annals and Magazine of Natural History.'

GENTLEMEN,—Although I do not pretend to have any special knowledge of Cetacea, I think it might prove of some interest to your readers, and also serve to complete the account given in the April number of your Journal of this extremely rare whale, if I draw attention to a fact which has come to light since the skeleton of the fœtus described has been macerated.

In Messrs. Southwell and Harmer's account of *Mesoplodon bidens* the authors say that while several of the older drawings and descriptions give the colour of the ventral surface as white, in the fine adult female I now possess the whole ventral surface is black.

Now in the mandible of the fœtus the two teeth characteristic of the male are much developed and nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch long, which seems to prove this fœtus to have been of the male sex. In the fœtus the under surface, although much suffused with blood, clearly was white; this, I think, tends to prove that the male *Mesoplodon bidens* has the ventral surface white, while the female, apart from the white spots on the back, is uniformly dark on both *ventral and dorsal surfaces*.

I remain, Gentlemen,
Yours faithfully,
WALTER ROTHSCHILD.